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AUTHOR	Cook, Kathy
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ABSTRACT

This curriculum unit for middle school students explores the art of folklore and story telling. In the unit, students will explore the nature of various types of stories and tales and will identify the characteristics and motifs of subgenres such as tall tales, fairy tales, and fables. The following lessons are part of the unit: Folktales: A Variety of Unwise Characters; Folktales: Elements of Folktales; Folktales: Exploring American Tall Tales; and Folktales: Writing Folktales. Each lesson in the unit offers an overview; suggests length and grade level; lists subjects and subtopics; cites dimensions of leaning and intelligences being addressed; notes equipment and materials needed; lists teacher resources; and addresses National Standards for Arts Education and other standards. Each lesson also identifies instructional objectives and strategies; provides a detailed, step-by-step instructional plan; suggests assessment and extension activities; and lists teacher references. (NKA)

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ED 476 280

The Kennedy Center
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Curricula, Lessons and Activities

Curriculum Unit Detail

Folktales

This unit explores the art of folklore and storytelling. Students will explore the nature of various types of stories and tales and will identify the characteristics and motifs of sub-genres such as tall tales, fairy tales, and fables.

The following lessons are part of this unit:

- Folktales: A Variety of Unwise Characters
- Folktales: Elements of Folktales
- Folktales: Exploring American Tall Tales
- Folktales: Writing Folktales

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CS 511 346

The Kennedy Center ARTSEDGE WORLDCOM

Curricula, Lessons and Activities

Folktales: A Variety of Unwise Characters
(Part of Curriculum Unit Folktales)

Resource Type: lesson

Length: Four 50-minute periods

Grade: 6,7,8

Subjects: Language Arts, Performing Arts, Social Studies

Subtopics: English, Literature, Social: Multicultural

Intelligences Being Addressed:
- Interpersonal Intelligence
- Intrapersonal Intelligence
- Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence

Dimensions of Learning:
- Acquisition and integration of knowledge
- Attitudes and perceptions about learning
- Extension and refinement of knowledge
- Meaningful use of knowledge

Overview: The students will interpret folktale characters by reading a Puerto Rican tale and comparing it to other tales and the characters

found in them. They will also classify characters.

Equipment:

- Computer : Mac or PC with Internet access

Media & Materials:

Printouts: This lesson has printouts. They are referenced in the "Student Supplies" or "Other Materials" sections below.

Student Supplies: None

Other Materials: Copies of the following folktales from *Reading Literature* (see Teacher References section for complete bibliographic information):

- "Juan Bobo and the Princess Who Answered Riddles"
- "Two Ways to Count to Ten"
- "The King and the Shirt"
- "The Learned Son"

Assessment materials: Sample Checklists for Writing Assignments and Standards to Use When Developing Rubrics with Students

Related Textbooks: None

Teacher Internet Resources:

Lesson and Extension Specific Resources:

- **Folktale Links**
  http://www.muw.edu/~kdunk/folk.html

  This comprehensive list provides resources containing material regarding traditional and international folktales and fairy tales, including the Brothers Grimm, Cinderella, creation stories, and Scottish folktales.

General Internet Resources:

- **The de Grummond Children's Literature Collection**
  http://www.lib.usm.edu/%7Edegrum/

  This site from a research center at the University of Southern Mississippi contains original book covers and texts of various various fairy tales. Also included are subprojects on Cinderella, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Red Riding Hood.

National Standards for Arts Education:

- 5-8 Theatre Content Standard 1 : Script writing by the creation of improvisations and scripted scenes based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history

Click here for additional information on the National Standards for Arts Education

Other National Standards:

- Language Arts : Writing: #1, #2, #3; Reading: #5, #6

Source of Standards: ARTSEDGE, McREL

For more on the Standards in other subjects, please refer to the Mid-continent Regional Education Laboratory (McREL) website.

State Standards, if any:

To search the State Arts Standards, please visit the National Conference of State Legislatures website.

Instructional Objectives: Students will:

- use strategic reading behaviors to construct, extend, and examine meaning for a variety of texts.
- interact with texts using the following reading stances: developing interpretation and personal reflections and responses.
- prewrite, draft, revise, and proofread as part of a strategic approach to effective writing.
- develop interpretation for a variety of texts and purposes by revisiting the text to clarify, verify, and revise their understanding.

- develop a personal response to the text by considering students' prior knowledge and information from the text.
- use the four stages of the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, and proofreading.

Strategies:

Cooperative groups
Comparing
Categorizing
Individual writing

Instructional Plan:

Providing Background

Many folktales incorporate the motif of an unwise character, often called a fool. The theme of the unlikely suitor winning the hand of a princess appears in a number of fairy tales. "Rumplestiltskin" and "The Princess Who Couldn't Cry" are two examples. Ask students to think about why this notion of an unlikely candidate winning out is so appealing. (Such tales give readers and listeners hope that individual merit, not one's station in life, makes anything possible.)

Using Prior Knowledge

Read the following riddles to the class. Call on volunteers to give the answers:

1. What has an eye but cannot see? (Answer: a needle)
2. When is a door not a door? (Answer: when it is ajar)

To stimulate interest in riddles, use the following questions:

1. Do you know any riddles? (Call on students to share their riddles, and have other students answer.)
2. What makes a riddle different from a joke? (Answer: A joke is told to provoke laughter; a riddle challenges the listener's imagination and wit.)

Setting a Purpose

Answering riddles is frequently a technique used in folktales to reveal a character's wit or lack thereof. As you read the tale, "Juan Bobo and the Princess Who Answered Riddles," find out what

happened to the town fool when he tried to win the Princess.

Through discussion and/or writing, have students respond to the following questions:

1. *Literal:* What do the contestants have to do to win the King's daughter? What will happen to them if they fail? What are the events that Juan Bobo includes in his riddle (students should state the events in the correct order)? What happens on each of the three nights that the Princess tries to figure out the riddle?

2. *Interpretive:* The Princess is clever at solving riddles. What proof of her skill is given? Read Juan Bobo's riddle. Is cleverness important in figuring out the answer? Or is it more important to know what has happened to Juan on the way to the castle? Give reasons for your answer.

3. *Critical:* Is the King right in believing that someone who can make up such a difficult riddle is sure to be intelligent? Support your answer.

Interpreting Character

Think about the things that Juan does in the tale. He figures out what causes Panda's death. He makes up a riddle. He thinks ahead and demands the Princess's shoe and ring. He escapes beheading and marries the Princess. Do these actions seem to be the actions of a fool? What quality do you think Juan Bobo actually represents: cleverness, foolishness, or good luck?

Appreciating Tales

This tale might be seen as a fool tale. But does Juan Bobo really act like a fool? This tale also shares some similarities with fairy tales. It has a "once upon a time" setting. Does the story seem to take place in a fantasy world? Is the main purpose of the tale to amuse? Or does the tale teach a lesson the way fables do?

Understanding Point of View

This tale is told by an outsider who knows the entire story. Does the storyteller tell only what he or she sees? Or does the storyteller tell what goes on inside a character's mind? Find examples to support your answer.

Critical Thinking—Classifying Characters

Draw on the board a chart with two columns. Label the first column "Clever Characters" and the second "Foolish Characters." Have students fill in their own chart, listing characters from this tale as well as those from other tales. Have them give reasons for their answers. Accept alternative answers that students can support with evidence from the selections. Then have students answer these questions, explaining their answers:

1. Does a clever character always use his or her cleverness against a fool?
2. Does a fool always get tricked by a clever character?

Comparing Tales

Compare the events in "Two Ways to Count to Ten" to the events in "Juan Bobo and the Princess Who Answered Riddles." Some of the events in the two tales are alike. Others are different. Compare the tales in two paragraphs. Explain the similarities in the first paragraph and the differences in the second paragraph.

Writing Activity

1. Prewriting: Have students work with a partner to complete this step. Using a Venn diagram, list at least three or more details and categorize the similarities and differences between the stories.

2. Drafting: Have the students use the details in their prewriting notes to develop the two paragraphs.

3. Revising: Have students work with a partner to read and revise drafts. Tell them to ask for comments about their choice of details in each paragraph.

4. Proofreading: Have students review their work and make corrections.

After students have completed this writing assignment, have them write another two-paragraph compare/contrast composition about the characters (instead of the events) in the two stories.

Assessment: Evaluation will be based on students' participation in discussion, as well as the quality of their written responses. The teacher should develop a rubric or checklist to assess the writing

assignments. See the accompanying sample checklists and rubrics for reference.

Extensions:

Folktales frequently have the motif of the unwise character. Stith Thompson counted and categorized such characters in his book, *Motif—Index of Folk Literature* (see below in Teacher References). He found that fools appeared in more than a thousand stories. The following list is a sample of types of fools:

- Fools (general)
- Absurd misunderstandings
- Absurd disregard of facts
- Gullible fools
- Talkative fools
- Inquisitive fools
- Foolish imitation
- Literal fools
- Thankful fools
- Cowardly fools
- Bungling fools

Have students research these types of characters in folktales and then have them create a character sketch of an original, unwise character they might use in a story. Have them write a short monologue or work in groups to write a short script to describe and demonstrate the original, unwise character. This skit should clearly show the type of fool that the character is through the character's actions, words, expressions, and body language.

Teacher References:

Chaparro, Jacqueline L., and Mary Ann Trost. *Reading Literature*. Evanston, IL: McDougal, Littel and Company, 1989.

Thompson, Stith. *Motif—Index of Folk Literature*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.

Assessment materials: Sample Checklists for Writing Assignments and Standards to Use When Developing Rubrics with Students

Author :

Kathy Cook
Thomas Pullen Arts Magnet School
Landover MD

Review Date:

ARTSEDGENotes:

Sample Checklists for Writing Assignments

Checklist for Writing About Literature

Content and Organization

- Is the topic of each paragraph developed fully through the use of examples?
- Does each sentence in a paragraph relate to the topic sentence?
- Are the ideas presented in a reasonable order?
- Are transitional words and phrases used within and between paragraphs?
- Should any information be added?
- Should some information be dropped or moved?
- Does the concluding paragraph provide a good ending?

Style

- Is language simple and direct?
- Are point of view and tone consistent?
- Are there a variety of sentence types?
- Are too many "ands" used when other ways of combining sentences are appropriate?
- Are verbs active rather than passive?
- Are tenses of the verbs consistent?
- Are pronoun references clear?
- Are any words overused?

Mechanics

- Is each paragraph indented?
- Are words spelled correctly?
- Are capital letters used correctly?
- Are there sentence fragments that must be revised?

Checklist for Writing a Story

Read the story aloud. Use the following checklist to revise, proofread, and edit your writing.

Content

- Does the title point to something important in the story and grab the reader's interest?

- Have you included details that describe your characters and setting?
- Do you present the main character's problem clearly? Does each event of the plot grow logically from what happened before?
- Is your climax a clear solution to the problem? Does your plot end soon after the climax? Do you show the main character's reaction to the climax?
- Do you use dialogue to make the story more interesting and realistic?

Style

- Have you cut out unnecessary details?
- Have you used colorful adjectives and verbs wherever possible?
- Does your dialogue sound real?
- Do you use both long and short sentences for variety?

Mechanics

- Is each sentence complete (no fragments, no run-ons)?
- Are all the words spelled correctly? If you are not sure of the spelling of a word, have you consulted a dictionary?
- Have you punctuated and capitalized your sentences correctly? In dialogue, have you used quotation marks and capital letters correctly?
- Do you begin a new paragraph whenever the subject, time, or place changes or whenever the speaker in the dialogue changes?

Checklist for Revising Writing Assignments

Using Evidence Effectively

- Is the position stated clearly?
- Do the examples support the position?
- Does the writing end with a summary of the evidence and a restatement of the position?

Writing a Clear Description

- Does the description create a main impression?
- Does it show rather than tell?
- Have you used precise details?

Writing to Compare and Contrast

- Are your points of comparison clear?
- Is your organizational pattern consistent?
- Have you used words that emphasize similarities and differences?

Writing About Plot

- Is the connection between events clear?
- Have you used examples from the selection to support your judgment about the effectiveness of the plot?

Writing About Characters

- Is the character portrayed accurately, as he/she appears in the story?
- Are there examples from the story to support the character traits discussed?

Standards to Use When Developing Rubrics with Students

Scoring Rubric for Expressing Ideas Clearly	
4	Clearly and effectively communicates the main idea or theme and provides support that contains rich, vivid, and powerful detail.
3	Clearly communicates the main idea or theme and provides suitable support and detail.
2	Communicates important information, but not a clear theme or overall structure.
1	Communicates information as isolated pieces in a random fashion.

Scoring Rubric for Effectively Communicating for a Variety of Purposes	
4	Clearly communicates a purpose in a highly creative and insightful manner.
3	Uses effective techniques to communicate a clear purpose.
2	Demonstrates an attempt to communicate for a specific purpose but makes significant errors or omissions.
1	Demonstrates no central purpose in the communication or makes no attempt to articulate a purpose.

Scoring Rubric for Creating Quality Written Products	
4	Clearly communicates a purpose in a highly creative and insightful manner.
3	Uses effective techniques to communicate a clear purpose.
2	Demonstrates an attempt to communicate for a specific purpose but makes significant errors or omissions.
1	Demonstrates no central purpose in the communication or makes no attempt to articulate a purpose.

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Curricula, Lessons and Activities

Folktales: Elements of Folktales
(Part of Curriculum Unit Folktales)

Resource Type: lesson

Length: Five class periods

Grade: 6,7,8

Subjects: Language Arts, Performing Arts

Subtopics: Literature, Media, Social: Multicultural, Video

Intelligences Being Addressed:
- Interpersonal Intelligence
- Intrapersonal Intelligence
- Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
- Visual/Spatial Intelligence

Dimensions of Learning:
- Acquisition and integration of knowledge
- Attitudes and perceptions about learning

Overview: Students will read traditional folktales and view filmed versions of those stories. They will discuss the differences between the literary and media versions by comparing, contrasting, and analyzing the elements of each.

Equipment:

- Computer: Mac or PC with Internet access
- TV/Monitor:
- VCR

Media & Materials:

Printouts: This lesson does not have any printouts.

Student Supplies: Paper and pen and/or pencil

Other Materials:

1. Collections of familiar folktales that include some of the following: "The Three Billy Goats Gruff," "Cinderella," "Rapunzel," "Hansel and Gretel," and "Beauty and the Beast."

2. Videos or films of some the folktales above. (See Teacher References section for suggestions and bibliographic information.)

3. Copies of "The Deer Thief" (See Teacher References section for bibliographic information.)

4. Copies of "The Fox and the Crow" (optional).

Related Textbooks: None

Teacher Internet Resources:

Lesson and Extension Specific Resources:

- **Folktale Links**
  http://www.muw.edu/~kdunk/folk.html

  This comprehensive list provides resources containing material regarding traditional and international folktales and fairy tales, including the Brothers Grimm, Cinderella, creation stories, and Scottish folktales.

General Internet Resources:

- **Grimm Brothers' Home Page**
  http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm.html

  Compiled by D.L. Ashleman, a former University of Pittsburg professor, this site contains alphabetical listings of the Grimm tales. Several tales are linked to other versions of tales around the world.

- **Native American Lore Index Page**
  http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/loreindx.html

  Over 100 Native American folktales from several tribes across Turtle Island have been compiled on this resource.

- **The de Grummond Children's Literature Collection**
  http://www.lib.usm.edu/%7Edegrum/

  This site from a research center at the University of Southern Mississippi contains original book covers and texts of various various fairy tales. Also included are subprojects on Cinderella, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Red Riding Hood.

National Standards for Arts Education:

- 5-8 Theatre Content Standard 5 : Researching by using cultural and historical information to support improvised and scripted scenes
- 5-8 Theatre Content Standard 6 : Comparing and incorporating art forms by analyzing methods of presentation and audience response for theatre, dramatic media (such as film, television, and electronic media), and other art forms

Click here for additional information on the National Standards for Arts Education

Other National Standards:

- Language Arts (Reading) #5, #6

Source of Standards: ArtsEdge, McREL

For more on the Standards in other subjects, please refer to the Mid-continent Regional Education Laboratory (McREL) website.

State Standards, if any:

To search the State Arts Standards, please visit the National Conference of State Legislatures website.

Instructional Objectives:

Students will:

1. use strategic reading behaviors to construct, extend, and examine meaning for a variety of texts.
2. read for literary experience:
    a. demonstrate grade-level proficiency to use strategic reading behaviors before, during, and after reading.
    b. activate prior knowledge and relate it to the reading selection.
    c. identify meanings of terms unique to literary language.
    d. identify the structure of literary or narrative text.
    e. respond to literature through writing and discussion.
3. construct, extend, and examine meaning using strategic behaviors while reading for literary experience.

Strategies:

Analyzing
Classroom discussion
Cooperative groups
Critical thinking strategies
Teacher-directed instruction
Peer exchange

Instructional Plan:

1. For a warm-up, have students work in small groups, scanning the collections of familiar folktales to find some of their favorites. Have each student choose a favorite tale and share with the group why they selected it. Each student should then write a very brief summary of the tales, explaining the characters, setting, problem, and events of their favorite tale. Reporters from each group should share with the whole class their lists and brief summaries. Have the students listen for elements (motifs) that appear regularly in many of the tales.

2. Explain to the class that folktales from all around the world frequently use familiar motifs and elements, such as these:

- the youngest and smallest of siblings is successful after others in the family fail
- wishes are granted
- magic objects (rings, beans, or tablecloths) are standard

props
- animals talk
- monsters often appear
- use of trickery
- the number three is significant (however, in Native American folktales, four is the magic number)
- use of a variety of tools
- a poor person becomes rich

Talk about "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" as an example of a tale that uses some of these recurring motifs. Animals talk. There is a monster (the troll). The goats use trickery, and the number three is significant. Have the students review their favorite folktale and identify motifs.

3. Share with the students the fact that folktales are usually about ordinary people and everyday life. Other general characteristics that identify a story as a folktale include these elements:

- The stories begin quickly.
- Characters are uncomplicated (flat, not round; or one-sided, not multi-sided).
- Plots move swiftly along well-trod paths.
- All questions are answered before the story ends, but there is plenty of room for flexibility within the plot, from beginning to happy ending.

These characteristics comprise the folktale formula. Have students revisit the collection of familiar folktales to see if their lists of favorite folktales fit the folktale formula. Have the students share their findings in small groups, and then lead the whole class in developing a chart of how the various stories fit the formula.

4. While folktales share motifs and a common formula, they can be grouped according to certain types of tales. Listed below are groups of stories distinguished by an overarching motif.

- tales of talking animals
- tales that tell why (Pourquoi tales)
- tales of magic (fairy tales)
- cumulative tales
- tales of exaggeration (silly folk and legendary figures)

Have students return to their small groups and identify as many tales as possible under each type listed above.

5. Distribute copies of "The Deer Thief." In this tale, a hunter turns into a detective when his deer is stolen. Read the tale to see what the clues tell the hunter-detective about the thief who stole his deer.

This story fits the definition of folktale because it is about ordinary people and everyday life. Does the story meet other criteria of the folktale formula? Are most of characters one-sided or flat? What quality does the hunter stand for? What about the Justice of Peace and the thief? Do these characters stand for qualities, or do they serve mainly to move the tale along?

Have students write a paragraph to explain how this tale fits the folktale formula.

6. Analyze the medium of film as a way to tell a folktale. Show some videos of familiar folktales. Ask students to discuss how the medium of film or video affected the way they experienced the story. Did it take away the imagination or creativity in their minds, or did it enhance their vision of the story? Were the stories altered in the film version (in comparison to the print version)? If so, why were these alterations made?

Assessment:

Students will be evaluated through their participation in and completion of the activities. Teachers should develop an observation checklist for assessment purposes. Paragraphs will be evaluated on students' understanding of the folktale formula.

Extensions:

1. Suggest that students read "The Fox and the Crow." Ask students to define the quality that the hunter in "The Deer Thief" and the fox in "The Fox and the Crow" share in common (cleverness). Then direct them to write a paragraph explaining who they think is more clever. Students should follow these instructions:

Prewriting: For your prewriting notes, explain what you think cleverness involves. Does it have more to do with getting others to do what you want or with solving difficult problems? (The fox is clever because he knows that flattering the crow will make her drop the cheese. The hunter is clever because he knows how to look for clues and put them together to find the thief.)

Drafting: In drafting your paragraph, be sure to give reasons for your opinion. As you write, you may find that your reasons support

another idea of cleverness. You may begin your paragraph by stating who you think is more clever—the fox or the hunter. Remember to refer to your prewriting notes as you write.

Revising: After completing your draft, share it with another student. Ask your partner for comments about the development of your ideas. Use these comments from your peer editor as guidelines for revising your draft.

Proofreading: Check for correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and word usage.

2. Have students read the following directions and retell "The Deer Thief" from a different perspective.

Point of View: Some stories are written as if a character in the story is telling the events. The reader experiences the story from the point of view of that character. Rewrite "The Deer Thief" from the point of view of either the hunter or the Justice of the Peace. Imagine that one of them is telling someone else what happened. Complete each of the steps in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising and proofreading.

Teacher References:

Bell, Edward (dir.). *Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales for Every Child.* New York: HBO, 1995–1999. (VHS recording of TV Series.)

Cole, Joanna. *Best Loved Folktales of the World.* Wilmington, NC: Anchor Publishing, 1983.

Dubin, Charles S. (dir.) *Cinderella.* New York: CBS Television, 1965. (VHS recording of TV production.)

Griego y Maestas, José and Rodolfo A. Anaya. *Cuentos: Tales from the Hispanic Southwest.* "The Deer Thief." New Mexico: Museum of New Mexico Press, January 1981. pp. 127–129.

Iscove, Robert (dir). *Cinderella.* Los Angeles: Sony Video, 1997. (VHS recording of TV production.)

Helmer, Marilyn. *Three Tales of Three: Goldilocks and the Three Bears, the Three Billy Goats Gruff, the Three Little Pigs.* New York: Kids Can Press, 2000.

Ranke, Kirk (ed.) and Lotte Baumann (trans). *Folktales of Germany.* Forward by Richard M. Dorson. Chicago; The

University of Chicago Press, 1966.

Trousdale, Gary and Kirk Wise (dirs.). *Beauty and the Beast*. Los Angeles: Buena Vista Pictures, 1991. (VHS recording.)

Zipes, Jack (ed.) and J. J. Grandville (ill.). *Aesops Fables*. "The Fox and the Crow." New York: New American Library, 1992. p. 275.

Author : Kathy Cook
Thomas Pullen Arts Magnet School
Landover MD

Review Date:

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Curricula, Lessons and Activities

Folktales: Exploring American Tall Tales
(Part of Curriculum Unit Folktales)

Resource Type: lesson

Length: 5 class periods

Grade: 6,7,8

Subjects: Language Arts, Performing Arts, Social Studies

Subtopics: Folk Arts, History, Journalism, Literature, Social: Multicultural, Theater

Intelligences Being Addressed:
- Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence
- Interpersonal Intelligence
- Intrapersonal Intelligence
- Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence

Dimensions of Learning:
- Acquisition and integration of knowledge
- Attitudes and perceptions about learning
- Extension and refinement of knowledge

Overview: Students will explore several American tall tales, identifying the tall tale elements. Students will write responses to these tales, including

a composition in the form of a monologue or a news report. They will perform these compositions for the class.

Equipment:

- Computer : Mac or PC with Internet access

Media & Materials:

Printouts: This lesson has printouts. They are referenced in the "Student Supplies" or "Other Materials" sections below.

Student Supplies: Paper, pen, and/or pencil
Props for monologue or news report

Other Materials: Copies of various tall tales, including "Pecos Bill: America's Greatest Cowboy," "Paul Bunyan and Babe," and "Flatboat Annie." (See Teacher References section for bibliographic information.)

Handouts with questions and/or instructions for students:

- "Pecos Bill: America's Greatest Cowboy"
- "Paul Bunyan and Babe, the Blue Ox"
- "Flatboat Annie"
- Writing Assignment

Related Textbooks: None

Teacher Internet Resources:

Lesson and Extension Specific Resources:

- **Folktale Links**
  http://www.muw.edu/~kdunk/folk.html

  This comprehensive list provides resources containing material regarding traditional and international folktales and fairy tales, including the Brothers Grimm, Cinderella, creation

stories, and Scottish folktales.

- **Introduction to the Study of American Tall Tales**
  http://www.ga.k12.pa.us/academics/ls/4/la/4r/talltale/ttintro.htm

  This site contains a brief overview of the evolution and history of tall tales in America. It also includes several ideas for student assignments.

General Internet Resources:

- **The American West**
  http://www.americanwest.com/

  This site discusses the development of the American West, from the Frontier and Pioneer days of the Wild West to the West of today. Find links on westward expansion and trails, America's freedom documents, Native Americans, pioneers, and more!

National Standards for Arts Education:

- 9-12 Theatre Content Standard 1 : Script writing through improvising, writing, and refining scripts based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history
- 9-12 Theatre Content Standard 2 : Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining characters in improvisations and informalor formal productions
- 9-12 Theatre Content Standard 3 : Designing and producing by conceptualizing and realizing artistic interpretations for informal or formal productions

Click here for additional information on the National Standards for Arts Education

Other National Standards:

- Language Arts #1, #2, #3, #4, #8

Source of Standards: McREL, ArtsEdge

For more on the Standards in other subjects, please refer to the Mid-continent Regional Education Laboratory (McREL) website.

State Standards, if any:

To search the State Arts Standards, please visit the National Conference of State

Legislatures website.

Instructional Objectives:

Students will:

1. interact with text using the four stances:
   - global understanding
   - developing interpretation
   - personal reflections and responses
   - critical stance
2. read for literary experience.
3. use strategic reading behaviors to construct, extend, and examine meaning for a variety of texts.
4. write for various audiences and address the following purposes:
   - to inform
   - to persuade
   - to express personal ideas
5. activate prior knowledge and relate it to the reading selection.
6. identify meanings of terms unique to literary language.
7. identify the structure of literary or narrative text.
8. respond to literature through writing and discussion.
9. interpret tall tales.
10. demonstrate grade-level proficiency in writing to inform and explain concepts, and express personal ideas in order to persuade.
11. demonstrate grade-level proficiency to read for literacy experience using before, during, and after strategies.
12. present a report to the class in the form of a dramatic monologue or a news report.

Strategies:

Teacher-directed activity
Guided discovery
Independent student work
Peer exchange
Creative and expository writing assignments

Instructional Plan:

1. Explain to the students that there are certain types of folktales that contain exaggerations about characters and events. These are known as tall tales, and they were made popular in the United States. Early American settlers faced tremendous challenges: How could they tame a huge and wild land? The settlers had two choices—either give up or find ways to cope. One way of coping was by telling humorous stories about heroes and heroines. Pecos Bill,

they said, could squeeze rain out of a cyclone. Flatboat Annie or "Big Annie" could tug a boatload of cargo all by herself.

Most heroes and heroines of tall tales have unknown origins. Often there was a real person who was known for unusual strength or courage. Stories were told about these people and their deeds. As stories were told again and again, they were exaggerated. Eventually, the heroes and heroines became larger-than-life characters. In other cases, some of the tall tale characters never lived at all. They are fictional characters who became more fantastic with each retelling of their stories.

Elicit from students brief descriptions of folktales and tall tales they remember hearing from family and friends. Draw on the diversity of the students' backgrounds.

2. Introduce the three main elements of tall tales: character, setting, and hyperbole.

Character

Discuss with students the fact that the characters in tall tales differ from characters in other types of literature because their traits and feats are more exaggerated. Emphasize that the characters in tall tales often personify the traits most admired by the people who helped create the stories. Lumberjacks, for example, created the character of Paul Bunyan. Railroad laborers told the story of John Henry. These types of heroes and heroines were courageous, strong, honorable, thoughtful, and intelligent. For example, Flatboat Annie hauled a cargo of toys upriver so that little children would be happy.

Setting

Setting is the time and place of the action of the story. Setting is more crucial in tall tales and folktales than it is in most fables. The setting in tall tales emerges from the specific experiences of people who lived in a particular time and place. For example, Paul Bunyan, a giant lumberjack, did great deeds in the huge forest of a new land. The story of John Henry (a heroic railroad worker) takes place during the rapid growth of the railroad network.

Hyperbole

American tall tales use hyperbole, an extreme exaggeration for emphasis. Generally, the exaggeration creates a picture that is

impossible and funny. Here is an example:

One time snowflakes fell so large in Oregon that the ladies put handles on them and used them for umbrellas.

3. Tell students to keep the following points in mind as they read the tall tales:

- Let the characters come alive in your mind.
- Imagine the setting. Picture where and when the events take place.
- As you read each hyperbole, picture what is being described.
- As you read, notice the connection between events. Events can be related chronologically, but in tall tales, events are usually related in terms of cause and effect; that is, the first event is the cause of the second, and the second is the effect of the first.
- When you read a tall tale, ask yourself: What makes the most important character a hero or heroine?

4. Have students read "Pecos Bill: America's Greatest Cowboy," "Paul Bunyan and Babe, the Blue Ox," and "Flatboat Annie" (also called "Annie Christmas" or "Big Annie"), and identify the tall tale elements (character, setting, and hyperbole) in each story. Also, have the students respond to the questions in the handouts, either in a discussion or in a writing assignment.

- Handout: "Pecos Bill: America's Greatest Cowboy"
- Handout: "Paul Bunyan and Babe, the Blue Ox"
- Handout: "Flatboat Annie"

5. Have students select one of the tall tales and complete the assignments outlined on the handout.

Assessment: Student evaluation will be based on the written and oral responses to activities. A quiz will be given on the elements of tall tales.

Extensions: 1. Social Studies and Art

Have students do research on artists such as Frederic Remington and Edward Curtis, who are known for their pictures of the Old West. Students should focus on and write about one aspect of the artist's life. Aspects may include the artist's youth and education, the artist's knowledge and impressions of the Old West, the way in which the

artist's work developed and was influenced by other artists, or the process by which the artist turned ideas into finished pictures.

Students could also research Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986), who lived for many years in New Mexico. Have a few students research her life and work. Compare her work to the other artists' work of the Old West.

2. Science and Art

Paul Bunyan sees many different kinds of trees throughout his career. Have students research the kinds of trees used for lumber. They should construct a chart explaining the purposes for which different kinds of wood are used. They may illustrate the chart with drawings of the trees or share their research with the class.

3. Geography and Map Reading

Within the story of Paul Bunyan, the author mentions Paul's travels through the United States. Have students draw a map of his travels. Ask them to note on the map the places where Paul Bunyan supposedly created geographical landmarks, such as the Grand Canyon.

Teacher References:

Osborne, Mary Pope and Michael McCurdy (ill.) *American Tall Tales.* New York: Knopf, 1991.

Robbins, Sandra. Oseki, Iku (ill.) *Big Annie: An American Tall Tale.* New York: See-More's Workshop, 1998.

Author :

Kathy Cook
Thomas Pullen Arts Magnet School
Landover MD

Review Date:

ARTSEDGENotes:

"Pecos Bill: America's Greatest Cowboy"

Comprehension

Do you think Bill's mother and father act like real parents? Explain your answer.

Bill thinks he is a coyote. Explain one thing he does that proves that he believes this.

Put the events from Pecos Bill's life in the correct time order.

Similes and Metaphors

Similes and metaphors are two methods to compare similar elements in unlike things. Similes usually use the words "like" or "as," whereas metaphors make more direct comparisons. In the following sentences, find the similes and metaphors and tell what effect the comparison creates in each:

1. "From then on, the horse was as gentle as a soft winding thatch of Jimson Weed.
2. "Then, toward noon one day, he spied something over in Oklahoma that looked like a tall whirling tower of black bees. 'It's just a cyclone,' Pecos Bill told his horse."
3. "Just as he and Widow-Maker came close enough to the cyclone to feel its hot breath, a knife of lightning streaked down into the ground."
4. "Everyone saw Bill grab hold of the cyclone's shoulders and haul them back. They saw him wrap his legs around the cyclone's belly and squeeze so hard the cyclone started to pant."

Hyperbole

Find examples of hyperbole in the tale. Explain how they affect the story.

Interpreting Character

What important qualities or traits does Bill have? What qualities do you think a hero should have? Do you think Bill is a hero? Explain your answers.

Setting

List three details that helped you picture the prairie during the Terrible Drought.

"Paul Bunyan and Babe, the Blue Ox"

Comprehension

Select the word or words in the following list that describe Paul Bunyan, and find examples in the story to defend your choices:

- selfish
- crazy
- lazy
- careless
- energetic
- polite
- generous
- proud
- kind

After Paul saves Babe from freezing, how does the Blue Ox feel about him? How do you know this?

Why do you think Paul Bunyan is still popular with readers today?

Setting

What different places does the writer describe in this tall tale? Write a sentence or two that describes each setting in your own words.

Hyperbole

Find at least three examples of hyperbole in this tale.

Personification

In the following description, what human qualities do the trees show?

> *The trees marched up mountains and down again. They followed rivers and creeks. They massed up together in purple canyons and shoved each other out of the way on the shores of lakes.*

Interpreting Character

Characters in a story must be enough like real people for the reader to believe in them. In what ways is Paul Bunyan like a real person?

"Flatboat Annie" (also called "Annie Christmas" or "Big Annie")

Comprehension

After Annie is captured by the outlaws, both she and the outlaw leader get angry. Why? What does the outlaw leader threaten to do? What happens to him?

Would you like to have Annie for a friend? Explain why you would or would not.

Hyperbole

List the events in the tale that are exaggerated.

Setting

Find two events in this tall tale that take place on the Mississippi River. Give three details that describe this setting.

Character

Annie pulls a flatboat of toys.

- What does this action show about her?
- What other qualities does she have?
- What actions show these qualities?

Comparing Characters

In what ways is Annie Christmas like Pecos Bill? In what ways is she like Paul Bunyan?

Folktale Writing Assignment

Choose and complete *one* of the following assignments:

1. Compose a short monologue in the voice of one of the tall tale heroes or heroines that you have studied and perform it for the class.

- What would the character say?
- What would his or her voice sound like?
- Would the character exaggerate things about himself or herself?

2. Pretend that you are a news reporter who must cover the events described in one of the tall tales. Write a news report and deliver it to the class.

- How would you report such extraordinary events?
- As a news reporter, would you be able to exaggerate the facts or use colorful descriptions?

The Kennedy Center ARTSEDGE WORLDCOM

Curricula, Lessons and Activities

Folktales: Writing Folktales
(Part of Curriculum Unit Folktales)

Resource Type: lesson

Length: Two to three 45-minute class periods

Grade: 6,7,8

Subjects: Language Arts, Visual Arts

Subtopics: Drawing, English, History, Journalism, Literature, Painting, Social: Multicultural

Intelligences Being Addressed:

- Interpersonal Intelligence
- Intrapersonal Intelligence
- Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
- Visual/Spatial Intelligence

Dimensions of Learning:

- Acquisition and integration of knowledge
- Attitudes and perceptions about learning
- Extension and refinement of knowledge
- Meaningful use of knowledge
- Productive habits of the mind

Overview: Students will write an original folktale using the writing process, and will then illustrate their tale and create a storybook.

Equipment:

- Computer : Mac or PC, with Internet access

Media & Materials:

Printouts: This lesson has printouts. They are referenced in the "Student Supplies" or "Other Materials" sections below.

Student Supplies:
Crayons and/or markers
Watercolor or tempera paint
Colored construction paper
Glue
Scissors

Other Materials:

- Handouts:

  Handout 1: Qualities of Folktales
  Handout 2: Writing an Original Folktale
  Handout 3: Ideas for Writing Different Kinds of Folktales

- Sample rubrics for use with students
- Sample rubric for scoring a story
- Sample checklists for writing assignments

Related Textbooks: None

Teacher Internet Resources:

Lesson and Extension Specific Resources:

- **Art and Life of William Johnson: A Guide for Teachers**
  http://nmaa-ryder.si.edu/education/guides/whj/main.html

  This lesson guide from the National Museum of American Art strives to "take students on a journey through the cotton

patches of the rural South, the city streets of Harlem, and the training camps of World War II."

- **Folktale Links**
  http://www.muw.edu/~kdunk/folk.html

  This comprehensive list provides resources containing material regarding traditional and international folktales and fairy tales, including the Brothers Grimm, Cinderella, creation stories, and Scottish folktales.

General Internet Resources:

- **Grimm Brothers' Home Page**
  http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm.html

  Compiled by D.L. Ashleman, a former University of Pittsburg professor, this site contains alphabetical listings of the Grimm tales. Several tales are linked to other versions of tales around the world.

- **Introduction to the Study of American Tall Tales**
  http://www.ga.k12.pa.us/academics/ls/4/la/4r/talltale/ttintro.htm

  This site contains a brief overview of the evolution and history of tall tales in America. It also includes several ideas for student assignments.

National Standards for Arts Education:	• 5-8 Visual Art Content Standard 1 : Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes • 5-8 Visual Art Content Standard 2 : Using knowledge of structures and functions • 5-8 Visual Art Content Standard 3 : Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas • 5-8 Visual Art Content Standard 4 : Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures • 5-8 Visual Art Content Standard 5 : Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

Click here for additional information on the National Standards for Arts Education

Other National Standards:	• Language Arts #1, #2, #3, #4

Source of Standards: ArtsEdge, McREL

For more on the Standards in other subjects, please refer to the Mid-continent Regional Education Laboratory (McREL) website.

State Standards, if any:

To search the State Arts Standards, please visit the National Conference of State Legislatures website.

Instructional Objectives: Students will:

- write for various audiences and address the purpose of expressing personal ideas, informing, and persuading.
- pre-write, draft, revise, and proofread as part of the strategic approach to effective writing.
- consider correctness, completeness, and appropriateness and make conscious language choices that create style and tone and affect reader response.
- focus on sentence form, word choice, grammar, usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
- demonstrate grade-level proficiency in writing to express personal ideas by being able to do the following: choose a literary form, using its appropriate elements, to create a complete whole; follow a plan in which ideas are logically ordered; consistently direct writing to the intended audience; frequently choose vocabulary to clarify and enhance the form selected using language purposefully.

Strategies:
Teaher-guided instruction
Creative writing
Peer evaluation
Individual hands-on activity

Instructional Plan:

1. Review with students the following concepts: elements of a folktale, common motifs, the folktale formula, and types of folktales. Refer to Handout 1.

2. Review with students the writing process and techniques outlined on Handout 2.

3. Before students begin the writing process, develop checklists and

a rubric to be used as they follow the writing process. (See accompanying sample checklists and rubrics for reference.)

4. Review with the students the steps that every story outline should include.(These are also included on the handout.)

I. Beginning:

Introduce the main character
Describe the setting
Begin the plot

II. Middle:

Introduce the character's problem
Introduce minor characters
Build toward the point of highest interest, or climax

III. Ending:

Reach the point of highest interest
Wind down the action, and give the final outcome.

5. If students need assistance in getting started, distribute and discuss Handout 3, which gives suggestions and steps for writing different kinds of folktales.

6. As a final assignment, students should create illustrations for their stories.

Assessment: Students will be evaluated on their original tale according to a scoring rubric developed by the teacher. See the accompanying sample rubric for scoring a story.

Extensions: 1. Poetry

Read to the class "Jewels and Ravens," a folk tale from Africa (in *World Folktales*; see Teacher References section for bibliographic information). Then, have students write an original poem following these directions:

An important aspect of this story is the fact that the husband and wife

have reached old age and have become opposite kinds of people. What will you be like by the time you are 80 years old?

Make a list of the things you enjoy doing now (i.e., hot dogs, swimming in cool streams during the hottest days of the summer, listening to rock n' roll, playing video games, etc.).

Make another list of things that you would like to be doing when you are 80 years old. Be specific and go for the unexpected (i.e., wearing bright colored feathers in your hair, riding in hot air balloons and dropping candy to children, learning to yodel, etc.).

2. Art

Using prints of famous works of art as motivation, have students write a folktale that expresses their feelings about the work. Be sure students include motifs and elements of a folktale. Personification and hyperbole should be encouraged. Works by African-American artist William Johnson would be appropriate for this exercise.

Teacher References:

Cole, Joanna. *Best Loved Folktales of the World*. Wilmington, NC: Anchor Publishing, 1983.

Mallet, Jerry and Keith Polette. *World Folktales*. Fort Atkinson: Alleyside Press, 1994.

Author :

Kathy Cook
Thomas Pullen Arts Magnet School
Landover MD

Review Date:

ARTSEDGENotes:

Qualities of Folktales

Elements of Folktales:

- Folktales are usually about ordinary people and everyday life.
- The stories include setting, characters, and a problem.
- The characters are often flat, representing one particular trait such as cleverness.
- Hyperbole is always found in tall tales.

Common Folktale Motifs:

- wishes granted
- a monster
- magic objects
- use of trickery
- a poor person becomes rich
- the number three is significant
- the youngest or smallest of siblings is successful after others in the family fail
- a variety of unwise characters

The Folktale Formula:

- The plot begins quickly.
- Characters are one-sided.
- Plots move along well-trod paths.
- All questions are answered before the story ends.

Types of Folktales:

- tales of talking animals
- tales that tell why ("pourqoui")
- tales of magic (fairy tales)
- cumulative tales
- tales of exaggeration or legendary tales (tall tales)

Writing an Original Folktale

The Writing Process:

Prewriting:

Generate ideas for your original folktale by using some of these strategies:

- brainstorming
- mapping and webbing
- observing
- questioning
- listening
- reading
- gathering information
- discussing and outlining

2. Drafting:

Communicate your ideas, feelings, knowledge, experience, and imagination in your writing. Write, skipping every other line, and refer back to your prewriting ideas.

3. Revising:

Revise your tale after completing oral and/or written self-evaluation, conferring with peers and/or your teacher. Make changes and write or type the final copy.

4. Proofreading:

Make changes and write or type your final copy.

Outline for Writing a Story:

Most stories share a common organization and progression. Follow this outline as you write your folktale.

I. Beginning:

Introduce the main character.
Describe the setting.
Begin the plot.

II. Middle:

Introduce the character's problem.
Introduce minor characters.
Build toward the point of highest interest, or climax.

III. Ending:

Reach the point of highest interest.
Wind down the action, and give the final outcome.

Ideas for Writing Different Kinds of Folktales

Writing a Fool Tale:

Write a "fool tale," in which a clever character outsmarts a foolish character. Make up or adapt a joke that you have heard, and expand it into a tale.

1. Prewriting:

Choose a modern setting for your tale. Give each character a name that suggests something about him or her. List the events that will happen in the tale.

2. Drafting:

Write your tale. Pay special attention to describing the events in the order that they happen. Use dialogue. Remember that your main character must do or believe something silly or stupid.

3. Revising:

Review the definition of a fool tale. Be sure that your tale fits this definition. If not, draft again before working on the final version.

4. Proofreading

Writing a Tall Tale:

Make up a tall tale about a modern hero or heroine of tremendous size and strength. Tell how your character solves a problem by using his or her special abilities.

1. Prewriting:

List the powers of your hero or heroine. Then jot down details about a problem that he or she can solve by using those powers. Put the events of your tale in the correct time order.

2. Drafting:

Exaggerate the details about your hero or heroine. Use hyperbole. Follow the order of your events used in your prewriting notes.

3. Revising:

Share your draft with another student. Ask whether you made the relationship between your events clear. If necessary, write down and evaluate each event to ensure the correct time order or cause-and-effect relationships.

4. Proofreading

Writing an Animal Tale:

Write a tale about an animal that has special qualities and powers. The animal can be one that is unusual or imaginary. Use personification. Also, try using similes to describe your animal.

1. Prewriting:

For your prewriting notes, list some unusual animals and choose one of them. Think about how the animal will show its special qualities. List some similes you might use. Then, list the events of your tale.

2. Drafting:

In drafting the tale, follow your list of events. Write at least a paragraph or more for each event.

3. Revising:

Share with your partner and check for clarity and completeness of events and descriptions. Have your partner read your tale to you.

4. Proofreading

Writing a Folktale About Yourself:

Write a tall tale about an imaginary experience of your own. Use the words "I" and "me" to tell events as if they happened to you. Base the story on one major exaggeration. Use this story starter: "One day, like any other day, I was..."

1. Prewriting:

Choose the setting for your tale. Decide whether your story will have any other characters. If so, jot down some details about the other characters. List three impossible events and choose one of them as the subject of the major exaggeration.

2. Drafting:

When drafting this tale, remember to use "me" and "I." Also remember to make the connections between the events clear.

3. Revising:

Make sure that events in the story relate to the impossible event. Use some clue words such as: first, last, because, since, in order that, if-then, so-that, etc.

4. Proofreading

Writing A Fairy Tale:

Write a tale that focuses on a unique character who is introduced to magical forces and is given three wishes. The tale should detail the outcome of the character's choices.

1. Prewriting:

Decide what kind of person your character is, including his or her age and physical details. What are your character's hopes, fears, desires, dreams, problems and/or joys? What does your character do for a living? What is his/her past?

Set up an encounter between your character and a magical force so that your character is granted three wishes. Try to have your character meet the magical force in an unexpected way. Also, try to have the magical force be something that no one has ever thought of before. Have your character ask for his/her three wishes—be specific and original with the wishes. What the character asks for should form the basic problem of your story. Be creative in the resolution of the problem.

2. Drafting:

As you write, try to build the excitement by adding further complications to the story after the three wishes are granted and the character begins to make his/her choices. The problem should rise to a climax with the character's last wish. In many folktales, the character must use his/her last wish to undo the first two. You may also grant the character a fourth wish, but usually this fourth wish does not turn out to be what the character expects.

3. Revising:

With a partner check your tale for:

- A clear sense of organization: Does your plot develop in a logical way?
- Character development: Does your character act in a fairly consistent manner?
- Descriptive details: Do you describe people, places, and events with clear and vivid language?
- Problem resolution: Do you surprise your reader with your story's end?

4. Proofreading

Standards to Use When Developing Rubrics with Students

Scoring Rubric for Expressing Ideas Clearly	
4	Clearly and effectively communicates the main idea or theme and provides support that contains rich, vivid, and powerful detail.
3	Clearly communicates the main idea or theme and provides suitable support and detail.
2	Communicates important information, but not a clear theme or overall structure.
1	Communicates information as isolated pieces in a random fashion.

Scoring Rubric for Effectively Communicating for a Variety of Purposes	
4	Clearly communicates a purpose in a highly creative and insightful manner.
3	Uses effective techniques to communicate a clear purpose.
2	Demonstrates an attempt to communicate for a specific purpose but makes significant errors or omissions.
1	Demonstrates no central purpose in the communication or makes no attempt to articulate a purpose.

Scoring Rubric for Creating Quality Written Products	
4	Clearly communicates a purpose in a highly creative and insightful manner.
3	Uses effective techniques to communicate a clear purpose.
2	Demonstrates an attempt to communicate for a specific purpose but makes significant errors or omissions.
1	Demonstrates no central purpose in the communication or makes no attempt to articulate a purpose.

Sample Scoring Rubric for a Story	
4	• The story is complete and well developed. • The story fully considers the audience's needs. • The story has correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
3	• The story is partially complete and adequately developed. • The story somewhat anticipates the audience's needs. • Most of the story has correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
2	• The story is incomplete but has some development. • The story tries to anticipate the audience's needs. • Most of the story shows little use of correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
1	• The story is incomplete and is not developed. • The story does not anticipate the audience's needs. • The story shows little or no use of correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Sample Checklists for Writing Assignments

Checklist for Writing About Literature

Content and Organization

- Is the topic of each paragraph developed fully through the use of examples?
- Does each sentence in a paragraph relate to the topic sentence?
- Are the ideas presented in a reasonable order?
- Are transitional words and phrases used within and between paragraphs?
- Should any information be added?
- Should some information be dropped or moved?
- Does the concluding paragraph provide a good ending?

Style

- Is language simple and direct?
- Are point of view and tone consistent?
- Are there a variety of sentence types?
- Are too many "ands" used when other ways of combining sentences are appropriate?
- Are verbs active rather than passive?
- Are tenses of the verbs consistent?
- Are pronoun references clear?
- Are any words overused?

Mechanics

- Is each paragraph indented?
- Are words spelled correctly?
- Are capital letters used correctly?
- Are there sentence fragments that must be revised?

Checklist for Writing a Story

Read the story aloud. Use the following checklist to revise, proofread, and edit your writing.

Content

- Does the title point to something important in the story and grab the reader's interest?
- Have you included details that describe your characters and setting?
- Do you present the main character's problem clearly? Does each event of the plot grow logically from what happened before?
- Is your climax a clear solution to the problem? Does your plot end soon after the climax? Do you show the main character's reaction to the climax?

- Do you use dialogue to make the story more interesting and realistic?

Style

- Have you cut out unnecessary details?
- Have you used colorful adjectives and verbs wherever possible?
- Does your dialogue sound real?
- Do you use both long and short sentences for variety?

Mechanics

- Is each sentence complete (no fragments, no run-ons)?
- Are all the words spelled correctly? If you are not sure of the spelling of a word, have you consulted a dictionary?
- Have you punctuated and capitalized your sentences correctly? In dialogue, have you used quotation marks and capital letters correctly?
- Do you begin a new paragraph whenever the subject, time, or place changes or whenever the speaker in the dialogue changes?

Checklist for Revising Writing Assignments

Using Evidence Effectively

- Is the position stated clearly?
- Do the examples support the position?
- Does the writing end with a summary of the evidence and a restatement of the position?

Writing a Clear Description

- Does the description create a main impression?
- Does it show rather than tell?
- Have you used precise details?

Writing to Compare and Contrast

- Are your points of comparison clear?
- Is your organizational pattern consistent?
- Have you used words that emphasize similarities and differences?

Writing About Plot

- Is the connection between events clear?
- Have you used examples from the selection to support your judgment about the effectiveness of the plot?

Writing About Characters

- Is the character portrayed accurately, as he/she appears in the story?
- Are there examples from the story to support the character traits discussed?

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